Community Meeting 1
September 19, 2013

Meeting Agenda

Interactive Exercise – Where do you live/work, Vision
Introductions and Welcome
Presentation
- Purpose, Process, Importance of Placemaking
- Previous Plans and Studies and Goals
- Existing Conditions: observed conditions, opportunities and constraints
- Interactive Discussion: Goals and Issues to Address

Meeting Summary

The first community meeting for the Avondale Estates Downtown Master Plan 2014 was held on Thursday September 19th, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Avondale Estates City Hall (21 North Avondale Road). Close to 100 individuals gathered at the kick-off meeting, which began with several interactive exercises, with constituents identifying where they live and work in the city and providing their vision for the downtown's future.

Mayor Rieker invited the public to participate in exploring what direction the downtown should take, both in the short term and over the next ten years, through a series of community meetings. He also invited interested citizens to join the ad hoc committee, a volunteer advisory committee that will help with outreach and fact checking. Joel Reed from Pond then talked about the Livable Centers Initiative program from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), which helped to fund this project (along with the City) and provides funds for transportation improvements. This update to the original 2004 LCI could identify transportation projects that would potentially be eligible for funding by the ARC.

The consultant team described the Placemaking approach, which uses a framework for development focused on use, scale, and design. The group then discussed existing conditions, including an overview of previous plans and studies. Reed discussed some of the goals that had been identified by previous studies, then the community contributed their desired goals for the study. Richard Fangmann (Pond) presented results from the initial assessment of transportation conditions. The study will identify needed improvements to create a good multi-modal transportation network. The meeting attendees then shared their concerns and goals specifically related to mobility.

Joel Reed wrapped up the meeting by announcing the next meeting dates and times and inviting the community to take the survey, available on the project website.

Discussion Items

Study Goals

- Safer crossings to residential neighborhood
- Connect to the PATH
- Wider sidewalks, so they become places to be social
- Canopy street trees
- Connect to both MARTA stations: Avondale and Kensington
- Complete Streets – mobility for all users
- Green infrastructure and low-impact development
- More recreational opportunities, like indoor tennis or outdoor gathering spaces
- Intergenerational activities
- Inclusive and diverse

- Balance traffic calming and increased traffic
- Improve connectivity throughout city (multi-modal) to move cars from 278
- Office and industrial uses
- Parking (especially in front of Good Karma)
- Lots of green for visual appeal
- Create a sense of place that fits Avondale
- Reconsider the 278 bypass – if most of the traffic is through traffic, the bypass will help
- More resident-serving businesses that don't close early – places you need on a regular basis
- Low maintenance infrastructure using native vegetation
- Density is not an issue in Avondale Estates
- Sustainable
- More live/work options and more places to work
- Find out why development did not happen from 2004-2007 and really market this plan
- Encourage businesses to build outdoor spaces with codes and ordinances
- Housing options – include end-of-life options like assisted living and nursing homes
- Use public/private partnerships to fund infrastructure
- Tudor Village serves as a gateway but it is run down – maintain it better
- Are we planning for growth? What improvements are for new projected growth and what is for existing residents?
- We need the critical mass to support businesses with housing on Laredo Drive.
- People are going to Decatur – let's have them stay here for restaurants and shopping.
- Pet friendly – dog park, dog stations
- Hotel near MARTA would serve music crowd, Decatur, colleges
- Make sure parking is sufficient for businesses
- Explore a pedestrian bridge over 278
- Parking should be hidden – no huge parking lots
- Create a large greenspace in the Fenner Dunlop property

Mobility Issues

- Crossing 278 is a huge challenge – you're taking your life into your hands – it's a barrier to walking
- Bike boulevards – make it more attractive and inviting to ride your bike on side streets with wide paths
- Explore roundabouts and road diets (look at Ponce as an example)
- Could 278 and Franklin become a one-way pair?
- Narrow 278 with a road diet
- Functioning pedestrian crossing buttons are needed; there is no walking man signal at N. Clarendon at 278
- Allow golf carts across 278
- Create options for people to drive and park downtown, then walk once they get there.

This summary constitutes the author's understanding of the items discussed and conclusions reached. If there are any errors or omissions, please notify this author in writing.